

Concert Review: MEOW MEOW (with Pink Martini's Thomas M. Lauderdale)

by Tony Frankel
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When you hear the words “performance art,” do you envision a motionless Marina Abramovic allowing a 10-foot boa constrictor to wrap itself around her head? And when you hear the term “cabaret,” do you think of tired patter, same-old showtunes, and folks who’re trying to jump-start their career? Well, prepare to have your preconceptions, and your mind, blown away by the fabulous Meow Meow. This gorgeous and accomplished singer, dancer, librettist, lyricist, comedienne, and actor from Australia — collaborating with Pink Martini’s Thomas Lauderdale — gave us a zany wild original eye-popping indescribable night of, well, Meow Meow, whose concert hit the gorgeous Theater at the Ace Hotel on Broadway in DTLA for a century-spanning repertoire last Friday, February 2. While the tunesmiths weren’t mentioned by name, we got Dubin & Warren (“Boulevard of Broken Dreams”), Weill & Brecht (“Surabaya Johnny”), Brel (“Ne me quitte pas”), even Radiohead (“Fake Plastic Keys”) and a Piazzolla tango (“Rinascero”) alongside original chansons by Meow Meow and Lauderdale.

This talented chick is a melding of Joan Collins, Lady Gaga, Lucille Ball, Edith Piaf, and Liza Minnelli on steroids. She is as uncategorizable as she is dazzlingly unpredictable. Before you think you’re watching a Vegas revue crossed with a Weimar-era cabaret, she crushes you in her warm embrace and seduces you into more twists and turns than Alice discovered down the rabbit hole.

This foxy feline consistently personalizes every song, superbly interpreting the lyric, and always singing to us, never at us. Rarely have I seen a performer connect with an audience on such a broad but intimate level. And lest one think of her as basically a comic/campy performer, some of her most powerful and impactful moments occur during her intimate, low-key songs, during which she displays true authenticity and depth. (For this tour, she’s joined by Yair Evnine on cello and guitar and Carmine Covelli on drums and percussion, and a four-man string section.)

Meow Meow is one of the bravest and most uncompromising performers ever to grace a stage (on which several audience members ended up — that is when she didn’t have patrons move her mosh-pit-style over their heads in the orchestra section); there’s nothing she won’t do to entertain and enthrall her audience. She is one of those unique theatrical events that comes along all too rarely. This special experience, one truly shared between artist and audience, was love at first sight. If you ever get a chance, don’t miss the opportunity to avail yourself of this series of adventures, and step through the looking-glass with Meow Meow. You’ll be so glad you did.

Source: <https://www.stageandcinema.com/2018/01/29/meow-meow-concert/>